DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 194 549 TM 800 678

TITLE	School District Guidelines: How to Interpret and Use the Student Roster and Individual Student Report: New Jersey Minimum Basic Skills Testing Program 1979-80.
INSTITUTION	New Jersey State Dept. of Education, Trenton. Div. of Operations, Research, and Evaluation.
PUB DATE	79
NOTE	38p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Office of State Educational Assessment, New Jersey Department of Education, 225 West State Street, Trenton, NJ 08625 (free).
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Cutting Scores; *Diagnostic Tests; Elementary Secondary Education; Equated Scores; Mathematics; *Minimum Competency Testing; Reading Achievement; State Programs; *Student Evaluation; *Test Interpretation; *Test Results
IDENTIFIERS	New Jersey; New Jersey Administrative Code Education Title 6; *New Jersey Minimum Basic Skills Program

ABSTRACT

A minimum standards amendment to the New Jersey Public School Act of 1975 requires the testing of public school students to determine proficiency in the minimum basic skills of reading and mathematics, under the auspices of the New Jersey State Department of Education's Educational Assessment Program. To meet the mandates of this amendment, the New Jersey Minimum Basic Skills Tests were developed. One of the uses of the test is as a screening device to identify students who have not met the minimum proficiency standards. These standards, scores of 75 on the Reading test and 65 on the Mathematics test, have been established as a means of identifying students who can benefit from remedial instruction. The guidelines booklet has been developed to assist school personnel in the interpretation and use of the "Individual Student Report" and "Student Roster." Included in the guidelines are explanations of the reports and the data they contain, and suggestions for use of these data. The booklet also contains a section concerning presentation of the test results to the public and press. Included are a timeline, suggested methods for releasing the results, and answers to frequently asked questions. (RL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED194549

NEW JERSEY STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Division of Operations, Research and Evaluation

Office of State Educational Assessment

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

SCHOOL DISTRICT GUIDELINES:

HOW TO INTERPRET AND USE THE STUDENT ROSTER AND INDIVIDUAL STUDENT REPORT

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

C. I. Johnson

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

New Jersey Minimum Basic Skills
Testing Program
1979-80

Copyright © 1980 by State of New Jersey. All rights reserved.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

P. Paul Ricci, *President*
S. David Brandt, *Vice President*
Jack Bagan
William Colon
Anne S. Dillman
Ruth H. Mancuso
E. Constance Montgomery
Katherine Neuberger
Sonia B. Ruby
Jack Slater
Timothy Weeks
Susan N. Wilson
Robert Wolfenbarger

EX OFFICIO

T. Edward Hollander, *Chancellor*

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Fred G. Burke
Commissioner of Education

Arthur Winkler
Assistant Commissioner
Division of Operations, Research and Evaluation

William J. Mathis
Deputy Assistant Commissioner
Division of Operations, Research and Evaluation

Stephen L. Koffler
Director, Office of State Educational Assessment

Carl I. Johnson
Manager, State Testing Program
Office of State Educational Assessment

OFFICE OF ASSESSMENT STAFF

Hannah Druger
Marna Golub-Smith
Lydia Greenberg
Dorothy Hornyak
Maria S. Hvizda
Marilyn Rutledge
Diane Wagner

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE	iv
STUDENT ROSTER	1
USING THE STUDENT ROSTER	4
Identification of Students Above and Below Standard	4
Who Should Be Involved?	4
Use of the Cluster Score Index: Determining Student Needs	5
Use of the Cluster Score Index: Reporting Cluster Performance to Parents	5
Grouping Students Based on Particular Instructional Needs	7
Analysis of Cluster Score Indices for Program Improvement	7
Student Roster and Summary Reports	9
Student Help Chart	9
Use of Score Distributions When Presenting Test Results	10
INDIVIDUAL STUDENT REPORT	11
USING THE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT REPORT	14
Checklist Approach for Developing Individual Remedial Program	14
Analysis of Incorrect Item Responses	16
Use of Cluster Score Indices (Student Roster) and Incorrect Response Choices (Individual Student Report)	16
Involving Parents and Student in Remedial Process	18
WHO TO CALL FOR ASSISTANCE	18
PUBLIC RELEASE OF TEST RESULTS	19
Student Roster	19
Individual Student Report	20
Timeline for Release of Results	20
Suggested Methods for Release of Results	21
What the Press Wants to Know	21
APPENDIX A: Rationale for Equating	23
APPENDIX B: New Jersey Administrative Code	26

PREFACE

In September 1976, Governor Brendan T. Byrne signed into law a minimum standards amendment to the Public School Act of 1975. This amendment requires the testing of public school students to determine proficiency in the minimum basic skills of reading and mathematics, under the auspices of the New Jersey State Department of Education's Educational Assessment Program.

To meet the mandates of this amendment, the New Jersey Minimum Basic Skills Tests were developed. Over 30,000 students, parents, educators and other citizens identified the skills to be tested and the tests were first administered in April 1978.

One of the appropriate uses of the test is as a screening device to identify students who have not met the minimum proficiency standards established by the State Board of Education. These standards, scores of 75 on the Reading test and 65 on the Mathematics test, have been established as a means of identifying students who can benefit from remedial instruction.

This guidelines booklet has been developed to assist school personnel in the interpretation and use of the "Individual Student Report" and "Student Roster." Included in the guidelines are explanations of the reports and the data they contain, and suggestions for use of these data.

This year's booklet also contains a section concerning presentation of the test results to the public and press. Included are a timeline, suggested methods for releasing the results, and answers to frequently asked questions.

Another guidelines booklet, which will be distributed in the fall, will address the interpretation and use of the class, building, and district summary reports.

As the pupil, school and district performance levels on the 1979-80 test are examined, appropriate staff should also review the interpretive comments made on last fall's summary reports. Both sets of data should be used to determine program modifications for the coming school year.

As you use the data gained from the Minimum Basic Skills Test, please share your ideas for using the test results with this office.

Sincerely,

Stephen Koffler

Stephen L. Koffler
Director
State Educational Assessment

STUDENT ROSTER

Each district receives two Student Rosters for each grade tested in each school—one for the Reading test and one for the Mathematics test (see Figure 1).

The rosters list the students (last name first) in descending order of total test performance. Thus, the first students identified on any roster are the students with the highest Minimum Basic Skills Total Scores. Students are listed alphabetically where more than one student has achieved the same score.

Next to each student's name is his/her date of birth, sex, Minimum Basic Skills Total Score and, depending upon the test, three or four Cluster Score Indices. Clusters are groups of items which measure similar skills (e.g., Word Recognition, Problem Solving, etc.).

The Minimum Basic Skills Total Score is an index of total test performance and ranges from 0 to 100. The use of the Minimum Basic Skills Total Score scale is necessary because the 1979-80 test is not exactly equal in difficulty to the 1978-79 test nor to the 1977-78 test. The specifications on the Minimum Basic Skills Tests remain the same from year to year, but all the items change. Whenever any test publisher develops different forms of a test, considerable effort is made to construct parallel forms. Even with such effort, however, it is rare to find two forms of a test which are precisely equivalent in difficulty.

Valid comparisons of tests can be made only when the tests are equal in difficulty. To allow for the differences in difficulty of the tests, the Minimum Basic Skills Score scale was developed. It is similar to the score scale used by commercial test publishers and other state testing programs and is used in reporting the results of the Minimum Basic Skills Test in order to maintain the same required levels of achievement from year to year. A process called "equating" is used to adjust scores for any differences in test difficulty. Minimum Basic Skills Total Scores are "equated" scores. A description of the Minimum Basic Skills Score scale is presented in Appendix A.

As a result of using the Minimum Basic Skills Score scale, the uniform statewide standards this year are exactly the same as in preceding years—Minimum Basic Skills Total Scores of 75 in Reading and 65 in Mathematics. Those scores correspond exactly to the achievement level of a student who correctly answered 75 percent of the items on the Reading test, or 65 percent of the items on the Mathematics test, on the 1977-78 Minimum Basic Skills Test.

The Cluster Score Indices range from 1 to 7. Each of these numbers represents a performance range on the Minimum Basic Skills Score scale. For example, on any of the tests a Cluster Score Index of 7 means that the student has attained a Minimum Basic Skills Score between 95 and 100 for the cluster in question. Because Minimum Basic

Skills Score units are equated scores, the Cluster Score Index of 7 means that the student's performance on the cluster is similar to that of students who answered between 95 and 100 percent of the items correctly on the 1977-78 test. To determine the performance range depicted by each of the seven Cluster Score Indices, consult the box in the upper right-hand corner of each roster page. Note that it is not possible to add the Cluster Scores to obtain the Minimum Basic Skills Total Score. Each score is calculated separately.

The State has not established cluster standards; however, as 65 and 75 are the State standards for total test performance in Mathematics and Reading, respectively, it may be reasonable for districts to establish their cluster standards as 65 for Mathematics and 75 for Reading. Using this approach, non-mastery in the skill areas would be indicated by Cluster Score Indices of 4 and below.

To assist in identifying students whose total scores are at or above the statewide minimum standards (65 for Mathematics, 75 for Reading), a dotted line has been printed at the appropriate point in the roster. Students above the dotted line have met the statewide standards; students below the dotted line have not met the statewide standards.

The letters SE or LE appear in the left margin before the name of any student whose answer sheet was coded accordingly at the time of test administration. The symbol V1, V2 or V3 appears before the name of any student whose test was coded "Void" at the time of test administration. V1 means the student's test was voided due to illness, V2 due to disruptiveness, and V3 due to some other reason(s).

On the last page of each roster, the following summary information is printed:

- Total number of students tested (excluding LE, SE and Voids)
- Number of students (excluding LE, SE and Voids) at or above the State standard
- Percent of students (excluding LE, SE and Voids) at or above the State standard
- Total number of students whose tests were voided (for all reasons)
- Number of students coded V1
- Number of students coded V2
- Number of students coded V3
- Number of students coded LE
- Number of students coded SE

Figure 1

NEW JERSEY MINIMUM BASIC SKILLS TESTING PROGRAM 1979-80

STUDENT ROSTER — MATHEMATICS TEST

DISTRICT: SCHOOL: TEST DATE: PAGE:

PUPIL	DATE OF BIRTH	SEX	[redacted]	CLUSTER SCORE INDICES: COMPUTATION	NUMBER CONCEPTS	MEASUREMENT GEOMETRY	PROBLEM SOLVING
KATHY M	06/21/71	F	73.4	6	6	5	5
BETH A	10/25/71	F	73.0	6	6	5	5
ROBERT A	05/27/71	M	73.0	6	6	5	5
JOHN J	06/23/71	M	72.2	5	6	5	5
DIANE	02/14/71	F	71.0	5	6	5	5
VANESS L	01/10/71	F	70.5	5	6	5	5
MINO	03/24/71	M	70.4	5	6	5	5
GEORGE P	08/21/71	M	70.1	5	6	5	5
CAROL M	04/10/71	F	70.0	5	5	5	5
LYNN	08/11/71	F	69.8	5	5	5	5
SCOTT	10/27/71	M	68.8	5	5	(4)	(4)
JEFFRE A	07/11/71	M	68.8	5	5	5	5
CATHY A	05/14/71	F	68.4	5	5	5	5
ANDRE D	08/28/70	M	67.0	5	5	5	5
JOHN J	04/05/71	M	66.6	5	5	5	5
MARGE L	01/09/71	F	66.6	5	5	5	5
CHERYL B	06/17/71	F	66.4	5	5	5	5
BILL A	11/26/70	M	66.4	5	5	5	5
KIM R	07/04/71	F	65.0	5	5	5	5
PHYLLI M	07/ 9/71	F	65.0	5	5	5	5
MARGAR A	03/13/71	F	64.5	4	4	(6)	(5)
SHEILA M	12/16/70	F	63.0	4	4	4	4
PATRIC L	04/2 /71	M	62.2	4	4	4	4
MIKE S	07/28/71	M	62.0	4	4	4	4
PATRIC A	08/01/71	F	61.8	4	4	4	4
HAROLD W	04/10/71	M	61.0	4	4	4	4
JANICE M	06/17/71	F	60.8	4	4	4	4
MIKE D	05/25/71	M	58.4	4	4	4	4
MARY F	11/13/70	F	57.2	4	4	4	4
JEFFRE A	12/24/70	M	57.2	4	4	4	4
WENDY M	11/24/70	F	56.0	4	4	4	4
MICHEL	05/20/71	F	54.6	4	4	4	4
DAVID A	10/30/71	M	53.8	4	4	4	4
JENNIE C	09/14/71	F	52.4	4	4	4	4
HEATHE H	03/07/71	F	52.0	4	4	4	4
JAMES B	12/23/71	M	51.5	3	3	4	4
CHRIS D	06/11/71	M	50.0	3	3	4	4
CLIF W	04/15/71	M	50.0	3	3	4	4

CODED VOID
- V1
- V2
- V3

CODED LIMITED ENGLISH
- LE

CODED SPECIAL EDUCATION
- SE
- SE
- SE

EVEN THOUGH THE TOTAL SCORE IS ABOVE THE STANDARD, THIS STUDENT APPEARS TO HAVE DEFICIENCIES IN TWO SKILL AREAS.

DOTTED LINE INDICATES CUT-OFF POINT SEPARATING STUDENTS WHO SCORED ABOVE AND BELOW STANDARD ON TOTAL TEST.

STUDENT SCORED BELOW STANDARD ON TOTAL TEST BUT HAS APPARENT STRENGTH IN THESE SKILL AREAS.

NOTE: CLUSTER SCORES CANNOT BE ADDED AND AVERAGED DUE TO VARYING NUMBERS OF ITEMS.

CLUSTER SCORE INDEX	MBS SCORE RANGE
7	95 - 100
6	80 - 94
5	65 - 79
4	50 - 64
3	35 - 49
2	20 - 34
1	00 - 19

The MBS Total Score is a score ranging from 0-100 which was developed to facilitate comparisons between last year's MBS tests and this year's MBS tests. Students whose MBS Total Score is 65 or greater met the minimum proficiency requirement. The cluster score indices are also based on the same MBS score scale. For a detailed explanation of the MBS scores, consult the accompanying guidelines booklet.

07610-001

USING THE STUDENT ROSTER

Identification of Students Above and Below Standard

The primary purpose of the Student Roster is to identify students who have scored below the statewide standards. Students with total scores below 65 on the Mathematics roster or below 75 on the Reading roster may not have met the minimum standards. The word may has been used because it is the district's responsibility to verify that students' performance on this test accurately reflects their competencies in the minimum basic skills (N.J.A.C. 6:39-1.2c). Keep in mind that no single test should be used as the sole indicator of a student's competency in any skill area. It is suggested that a review be made of other test scores, teacher recommendations, and the student's classroom performance to help identify those students who have not achieved minimum competency in basic skills, and are in need of remediation (N.J.A.C. 6:8-3.4). Once the scores of those students who have not met the standard are validated, the students must be provided remediation in the identified areas of deficiency.

Students who scored above the standard may also be in need of some remediation, and their performance should also be verified (N.J.A.C. 6:39-1.2c). Particular attention should be given to those students who scored at or just above the minimum standards.

Who Should be Involved?

The most appropriate staff to examine student performance would be the reading and mathematics teachers at grades 3, 6, 9 and 11. They are most familiar with the students tested and can best confirm student performance on this test.

When the data are reviewed for selection of students for supplemental programs, the supplemental teachers and/or subject specialists should join the grade-level teachers.

Review of the data for program analysis should include grade-level teachers from the levels preceding those tested. For example, review of grade 3 results should include teachers from grades K-3. The skills being measured are not only taught in the grade tested, but are presented at appropriate points in the preceding years.

Following the analysis and identification of student needs, the findings should be shared with other teaching staff. The use of these skills is not limited to the reading and mathematics class.

Use of the Cluster Score Index: Determining Student Needs

In addition to the Minimum Basic Skills Total Score, each student has a Cluster Score Index for each skill cluster tested. Examination of the Cluster Score Indices will indicate whether a student has weaknesses in any of the skill clusters.

Once a weakness is confirmed, efforts should be made to modify that student's program of instruction in order to alleviate the identified weakness. Looking at the Individual Student Report to determine which items were answered incorrectly will help in the development of a program of remediation to meet the particular needs of that student.

It is possible for a student to have a total score above the standard but perform below standard in one or more clusters. For these students, additional assessment techniques should be employed to confirm that a weakness does exist in a particular skill.

Use of the Cluster Score Index: Reporting Cluster Performance to Parents

Parents do not have access to Student Rosters because the Rosters list students' names. Thus, parents rarely see their child's Cluster Score Indices.

A graph can be used to depict Roster information so that parents can easily determine their child's cluster weaknesses and strengths. The following steps are suggested for developing the graph:

(1) Pre-prepare graph sheets for plotting each student's Cluster Score Indices.

(2) Write each student's name on a separate graph sheet.

(3) Locate the student's Cluster Indices on the Reading and Mathematics rosters.

(4) Plot the student's Cluster Score Index for each cluster.

(5) Connect the plot points.

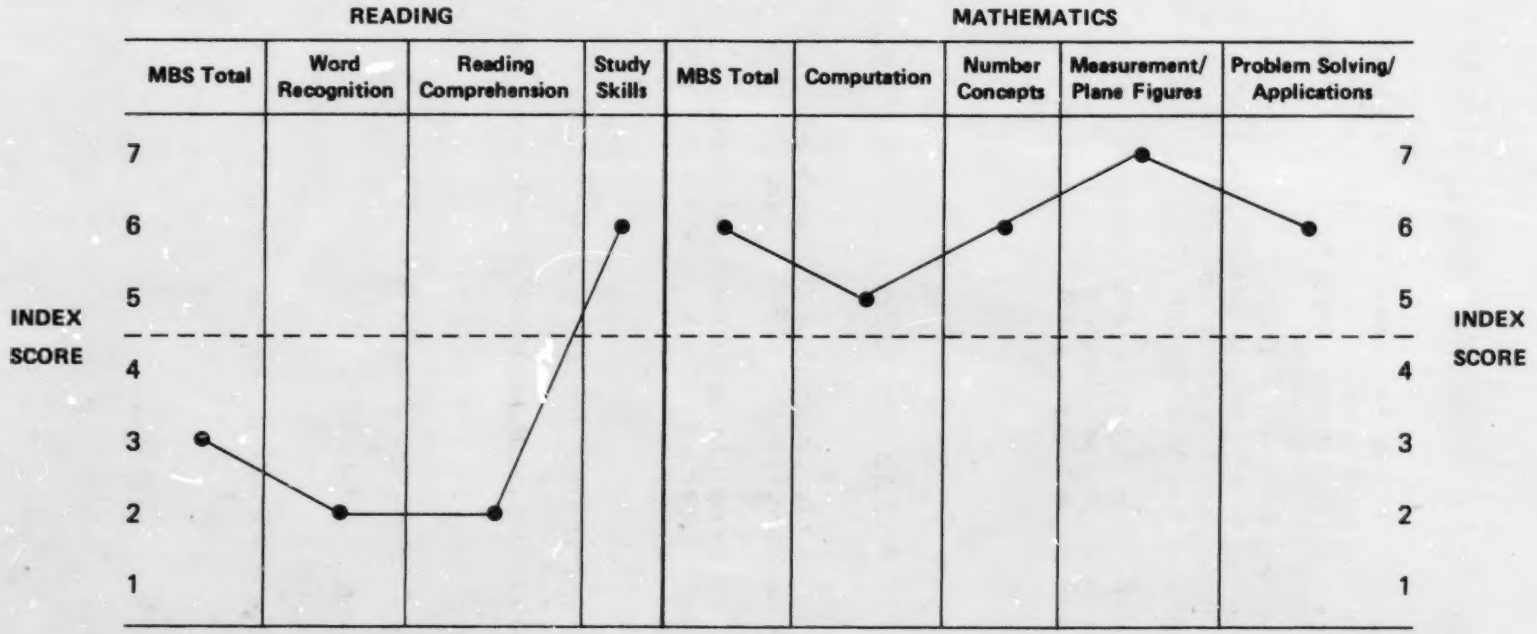
Figure 2 is an example of a completed graph.

Figure 2

SAMPLE ROSTER GRAPH

(Completion of this form is not required. It has been included to suggest a format that may be used to summarize data.)

Student's Name: John David



NOTE: An Index Score below the dotted line means the student did not meet the State standard.

Grouping Students Based on Particular Instructional Needs

By examining the Cluster Score Indices it is possible to group students according to the severity of their needs in particular skill clusters. For example, it might be advantageous to bring together in a group all students with a Score Index of 1 in Number Concepts. An Index of 1 is the lowest level of competency in a skill cluster. This would permit tailoring of instruction for these students. The level of instruction could begin at the level of competency demonstrated by the students. This procedure could be followed for any or all clusters, and for any or all Cluster Score Indices.

Analysis of Cluster Score Indices for Program Improvement

The primary purpose of the Student Roster and the Individual Student Report is identification of individual student needs. However, analysis of group patterns of Cluster Score Indices may reveal that a particular cluster is difficult for most of your students. This can mean that modification of the instructional program is desirable.

Several ways of analyzing Cluster Score Indices for group patterns are suggested here. Figure 3 has been provided to show one format that could be used to summarize cluster data. Do not hesitate to implement your own methods for interpretation and use of this information.

One suggestion is to compare the numbers of students below the standard in each cluster. The cluster with the greatest number of students below standard would be the area of greatest weakness. This might indicate that an instructional program modification is necessary in that skill area. This would be particularly true if there were substantially more students below standard in one cluster than in the others.

Additional analysis might involve comparing performance levels of the students scoring below standard in each cluster. For each cluster, count the number of students with each Score Index from 1 to 4. For convenient examination these numbers can be displayed in a table similar to Figure 3. Comparison of the numbers may reveal, for example, that even though a greater total number of students scored below standard in Reading Comprehension, more of the students below standard in Study Skills have Score Indices of 1 (the lowest Index). A large number of Score Indices of 1 in a cluster might suggest a more severe problem than would a greater number of students scoring just below the standard in another cluster.

This type of analysis can give an indication of possible program needs. The summary reports to be distributed later will allow for detailed analysis of the specific skills performance of every class, school and district.

Figure 3

SAMPLE ANALYSIS OF CLUSTER SCORE INDICES FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

(Completion of this form is not required. It has been included to suggest a format that may be used to summarize data.)

		CLUSTER						
		READING			MATHEMATICS			
Cluster Score Index		Word Recognition	Reading Comprehension	Study Skills	Computation	Number Concepts	Measurement/ Plane Figures	Problem Solving/ Applications
4 or lower (Total below standard)		41	108	52	26	31	113	43
Number of students with each Cluster Score Index below the standard:	4	26	38	4	8	3	16	1
	3	4	31	3	8	11	18	8
	2	6	22	8	7	8	38	12
	1	5	17	37	3	9	41	22

COMMENTS: Reading Comprehension had the greatest number of students below the standard. However, many of these students scored just below the standard, while a large number of the students below standard in Study Skills had the lowest Cluster Score Index.

Measurement/Plane Figures had the greatest number of students below standard, and a large percentage of these scored in the two lowest Indices. The largest percentage of the students below standard in Problem Solving and Applications had the lowest Score Index.

Student Roster and Summary Reports

Last fall the objective-referenced class, school and district summary reports for the 1978-79 MBS Test were interpreted to identify program strengths and weaknesses. Many districts used this information to modify their basic skills programs. Analysis of the Student Roster can begin to provide information on the impact of these modifications on student performance and provide further evidence of the need for additional modifications.

Comparison of this year's Score Indices to last year's may reveal changes in performance on each of the clusters. Many factors could have contributed to improved performance on a particular cluster; however, modification of the program or method of instruction could have been a significant factor. The analysis of these data should be considered as the summary reports are interpreted this fall.

Student Help Chart

Test results should be discussed with the students. Students should be made aware of their skill weaknesses and materials that are available for strengthening these skills.

A simple chart listing MBS skills and associated activities and materials could be developed for classroom use. Activities could include games, student tutoring or the use of any instructional materials that the students would enjoy. Thus, students would be able to work independently during their free time, or at home with their parents, to practice skills not yet mastered.

An example of a Student Help Chart is presented below:

Skills to Practice	Activities/Materials
1. Add two-digit numbers	Math Flash Cards Worksheets 6, 8, p. 33 in text Math Computer Tape #3
2. Tell time	Cardboard Clock Worksheet 16, 19 Work with Sara
3. Word Recognition	Dolche Cards Letter Blocks Scrabble

Note that completion of this chart is not required. It is shown to suggest a format that could be used to summarize information.

Use of Score Distribution When Presenting Test Results

When performance levels are presented to the public, they are usually stated as the percent of students who met the standard. The public then wants to know how this compares with the previous year or with other districts.

To better report performance from year to year, it is suggested that a comparison be made of the score distributions. This can be done by reporting the number of students having each MBS Score, but it will be more convenient to categorize MBS Scores using the Indices used in reporting cluster performance. For example, a student whose MBS Score in Mathematics was between 0 and 19 would have an Index of 1, between 20 and 34 an Index of 2, and so on. Determine the percent of students in each category, and compare the percents from previous years. Shifts in the distributions could indicate strengths or weaknesses in your program.

A dramatic decrease in the percent of students in the lowest categories could be more meaningful than a small decrease in the percent of students meeting the standard.

The uses of the Student Roster suggested in the sections above are only some of the possible ways this report may be used. Do not hesitate to implement your own methods for interpreting and using the Roster.

INDIVIDUAL STUDENT REPORT

The Individual Student Report shows how an individual student responded to each test item. In addition it gives the student's Minimum Basic Skills Total Score and the percent of test items answered correctly. Two copies of this report are produced for every student tested in grades 3 and 6; three copies are produced for each grade 9 and 11 student. One copy (two in grades 9 and 11) is for the use of appropriate school personnel and should be placed in the student's permanent folder after his/her results are analyzed. The other copy should be shared with the student's parent or guardian in a manner to be determined by the local district.

Responses to individual Reading items are presented in the top box on the front page of the report (see Figure 4). The student's responses to the Mathematics items are given in the bottom box. A symbol appears under each item number to indicate how the student responded to that item. A plus sign (+) signifies that the student responded correctly. An incorrect response is indicated by any of the letters A, B, C, or D; the letter shown identifies the incorrect choice selected by the student. "0" is used to signify that the student made no response.

Items are ordered by cluster, or general skill area—e.g., Word Recognition. Within each cluster, items are ordered by specification, or specific skill. Above the item numbers in each specification appears a small letter which corresponds to the description of the specification printed below.

In addition to identifying individual item responses and indicating what the different items measure, the Individual Student Report gives two indices of total test performance: the Minimum Basic Skills (MBS) Score and the Percent Correct.

The Minimum Basic Skills Score, which is explained in the "Student Roster" section of this booklet, indicates how the student has scored relative to the uniform statewide minimum standard. Remember, there are two such standards, one for Reading and one for Mathematics. The minimum standard for Reading is an MBS Score of 75; the minimum standard for Mathematics is an MBS Score of 65.

The Percent Correct is equal to the number of correct responses divided by the total number of items (times 100). Slight differences between the Percent Correct and the Minimum Basic Skills Score may be observed in some instances. The differences exist because the 1977-78 test and the current test are not exactly equal in level of difficulty (see Appendix A).

The arrangement of items, the meaning of the symbols, and the meaning of the two total scores are explained on the reverse side of the report (see Figure 5).

Figure 4

PUPIL: DATE OF BIRTH: SEX: TEST DATE:

R M

DISTRICT: SCHOOL: CLASS CODES: PAGE:

NEW JERSEY MINIMUM BASIC SKILLS TESTING PROGRAM 1979-80

INDIVIDUAL STUDENT REPORT

LEVEL 9

READING

	WORD RECOGNITION	READING COMPREHENSION	STUDY SKILLS
CLUSTER SPECIFICATION	a b c d e f g h	a b c d e f g h i j k l	a b c d e f g
ITEM NUMBER	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40

Figure 5

ABOUT THE MBS TEST

TO THE PARENT: This report presents your child's scores on the New Jersey Minimum Basic Skills (MBS) Test. This test was given to every public school pupil in grade 9 in the state.

WHAT THE TEST MEASURES: The MBS Test measures minimum basic reading and mathematics skills, not advanced skills.

WHO TAKES THE TEST: Tests are given to all New Jersey public school students in grades 3, 6, 9, and 11 every year. The test results act as an annual check on how well students are learning the minimum basic reading and mathematics skills.

WHAT THIS REPORT TELLS YOU: This report shows your child's performance in reading and mathematics. It also identifies particular strengths and weaknesses for all of the skills tested. The statewide minimum standards are MBS scores of 75 in reading and 65 in mathematics. Pupils who score below the minimum standards, and whose deficiencies are confirmed, must receive some program of remediation.

WHO SEES THIS REPORT: This report is available only to parents, guardians, students, and authorized school officials. If you have questions about this report, you should contact your child's teacher or principal. They can explain what the school is doing and what you can do to help your child master the skills measured by this test.

HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

TEST QUESTIONS: All of the MBS Test questions are listed, by number, on the other side of this report. The reading questions are listed in the section at the top of the report. The mathematics questions are listed in the section at the bottom of the report.

SKILLS: The MBS Test items are listed by **clusters**, or groups. There are three clusters for reading and four clusters for mathematics. A cluster consists of a group of items that measure a general reading or mathematics skill area. The **specifications** within each reading or mathematics cluster describe in more detail the specific skills your child needs to answer the items correctly.

SYMBOLS: Listed under the specifications for both reading and mathematics are the item numbers of the questions on the test. IF THE SYMBOL "+" APPEARS UNDER THE ITEM NUMBER, IT MEANS YOUR CHILD ANSWERED THE QUESTION CORRECTLY. A "0" MEANS YOUR CHILD DID NOT MARK AN ANSWER. IF YOUR CHILD ANSWERED INCORRECTLY, AN "A", "B", "C", OR "D" IS SHOWN. THE LETTER INDICATES WHICH WRONG ANSWER YOUR CHILD CHOSE. The more "+" symbols you see for the items in a cluster, the more certain you may be that your child has mastered those particular skills.

If your child chose the correct answers to most of the items in a cluster, the pattern of symbols may look like this: "+ + + A + + + B + +." This means your child has incorrectly answered only two questions and has probably mastered this particular skill. If your child has given incorrect answers to most of the items in a cluster, the pattern may look like this: "A D C + B + 0 A B." This means that your child has had trouble with items of this kind and needs additional instruction.

PERCENT CORRECT: The first box at the end of each row of test items shows you the percentage of all the items your child answered correctly.

MBS SCORE: In the second box is your child's Minimum Basic Skills (MBS) score. The MBS score shows your child's performance as compared to the standard established by the State in 1977-78. It may not necessarily be the same as the percent correct. Remember, if the score in the Reading MBS score box is 75 or higher, it means your child has met or exceeded the State standard in reading. If the score in the Mathematics MBS score box is 65 or higher, it means your child has met or exceeded the State standard in mathematics.

USING THE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT REPORT

The Individual Student Report can be used most effectively in conjunction with other diagnostic instruments to identify particular skills which have not been mastered by the student. Having identified the skills not yet mastered, it is possible to develop an individualized program to meet each student's needs.

Checklist Approach for Developing Individual Remedial Program

The following suggested procedure is primarily for use with the student who has not met the standard, but it can be used with any student.

(1) Compose a Needs Identification Checklist (Figure 6) with four column headings:

   A. Specification Showing Weakness
   B. Verification Needed
   C. Remediation Needed
   D. Comments (Strategies and Materials Used)

(2) Make enough copies of this checklist so that there is a sheet for every student.

(3) For each student, consider his/her test performance on each specification separately. Any specification for which the student has not answered most of the items correctly should be considered a specification showing weakness.

(4) List the name of each specification showing weakness on the student's Checklist.

(5) Decide whether the student's test performance on this specification is consistent with other test data and/or with the student's performance in class during the course of the school year.

(6) If test performance is consistent with other indicators, check the column labeled "Remediation Needed."

(7) If test performance is not consistent with other indicators, check the column labeled "Verification Needed." Further diagnosis or "validation" of these skill deficiencies is needed to determine whether remediation for the specification is necessary.

Figure 6

NEEDS IDENTIFICATION CHECKLIST

(Completion of this form is not required. It has been included to suggest a format that may be used to summarize data.)

Student's Name: _____

Specification Showing Weakness	Verification Needed	Remediation Needed	Comments: Including Strategies and Materials Used

(8) At the right of the checklist, space should be provided for comments by the student's teacher(s). These comments should address the instructional strategies and materials that were used in the areas of weakness.

The result of this analysis will be the identification of specific skills which the student has not mastered as well as teaching strategies that were used with the student. This information can be reviewed by the student's teacher at the beginning of the next school year to assist in improving performance in the areas of weakness.

Analysis of Incorrect Item Responses

Recorded on the Individual Student Report is the letter of the response chosen for each item answered incorrectly. Examining the test questions and available answer choices listed in the Directory of Test Specifications and Items (delivered to districts along with this booklet) may indicate that a particular aspect of the skill is causing the student difficulty.

For example: suppose that a problem in Mathematics required two operations to arrive at the correct answer. A student who incorrectly solved the problem selected a response indicating that he/she stopped at the first step in the operation. This information would be helpful when developing the student's program of remediation.

Use of Cluster Score Indices (Student Roster) and Incorrect Response Choices (Individual Student Report)

By examining student responses to the items in each cluster, it is possible to coordinate instruction for groups of students based upon their choice of incorrect responses (distractors).

Start by determining the cluster with the lowest Index Scores and the greatest number of students lacking mastery (e.g., Study Skills in the example shown in Figure 3). Develop a chart, such as the one shown in Figure 7, including the cluster name, the item numbers, the correct responses, and the names of those students who lacked mastery.

Using the Individual Student Reports, check the response made by each student listed to each item in the cluster. When reviewing that skill area, group the students based upon the greatest number choosing the same distractor.

A large number of students selecting the same incorrect responses might indicate that an analysis should be made of how that skill is presented in the program.

Figure 7

SAMPLE ANALYSIS OF CLUSTER SCORE INDICES AND INCORRECT RESPONSE CHOICES

(Completion of this form is not required. It has been included to suggest a format that may be used to summarize data.)

Cluster: Study Skills Level: 3

Student Name:	Item:	50				51				52				60				61				62			
	Response:	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D
1. Margie McMillan			* ✓			*			✓				* ✓		✓	*			✓		*			* ✓	
2. Sheila Mayer		✓							✓				✓		✓				✓			✓			
3. Patrick Lakes		✓							✓		✓			✓						✓		✓			
4. Patricia Sells				✓					✓				✓				✓		✓				✓		
Etc.																									

* indicates correct response choice for the item.

COMMENTS: Distractor D on Item 51 should be analyzed.

Students 1, 2 and 4 would be grouped together when reviewing the skill measured by Item 61.

Involving Parents and Student in the Remedial Process

The suggestions appearing elsewhere in this booklet primarily address how the school can use the MBS Test results. The following suggestion is offered recognizing that successful remediation requires the cooperation of both school and parent. This suggestion is intended to assist the parent and student in working to improve the student's level of mastery.

When analysis of the student's Individual Report is complete, consider what the parent or guardian might do at home to improve the child's level of mastery. In a simply worded one-page statement, indicate both the student's strengths and weaknesses. Following the statement of weaknesses, offer two or three concrete methods by which the parent can assist in improving the student's level of mastery. This information should be shared with the parent or guardian along with the Individual Student Report.

This analysis could also serve as the basis of a similar statement written for the student. While again stating the strengths and weaknesses of the student, this statement should differ from the parent's statement in that it emphasizes what the student can do to improve his/her own level of mastery.

These are but a few of the ways in which the Individual Student Report can be used. If you have developed and implemented additional ways, please forward your ideas to the Office of State Educational Assessment, New Jersey Department of Education, 225 West State Street, Trenton, New Jersey 08625.

WHO TO CALL FOR ASSISTANCE

As you review the various reports and guidelines booklets received as part of the MBS Testing Program, you may have questions or need clarification on some part of the interpretation process. If this is the case, you should first contact your county office. Each county superintendent has identified a member of the staff as the county test coordinator. The Office of State Educational Assessment conducts frequent meetings with the 21 county test coordinators, so they are familiar with all aspects of the testing program.

If you are unable to contact your county test coordinator, you can contact the Office of State Educational Assessment at 609/292-1532 or 609/292-5180.

PUBLIC RELEASE OF TEST RESULTS

Student Roster

(1) Distribution to districts begins three weeks after the return of answer sheets for scoring.

(2) The actual rosters cannot be made available to the public because they list students' names.

(3) A summary of the information included on this report is public information, such as:

A. Number and percent of students above and below standards (for each school and the district)

B. Total number of students tested and/or excluded in various categories

(4) Thirty days following the return of rosters to all districts, the Commissioner will release to the public the percentage of students at or above standard by subject and grade for all districts in the state (N.J.A.C. 6:39-1.3h), and districts must make the results available to the public (N.J.A.C. 6:39-1.3i).

N.J.A.C. 6:39-1.3h: Minimum standards reports shall be distributed to chief school administrators as indicated in subsection (b) of this section in such a manner as to provide a 30-day interpretation period prior to reporting to the local board of education and the public. Following this 30-day period, the Commissioner shall make available to the public minimum standards reports on each district which shall list the number of pupils tested and percent of pupils at or above the established minimum levels of pupil proficiency by grade and by test.

N.J.A.C. 6:39-1.3i: At the time the Commissioner makes available to the public the information stated in (h), all districts shall make available to the public the number of pupils tested and the percent of pupils at or above the established minimum levels of pupil proficiency for each school and the district by grade and by test.

(5) During the 30-day interpretation period, districts are encouraged to validate their results and release the information to the public.

Individual Student Report

This report is not available to the general public and may be released only to a pupil, his/her parent or legal guardian, and school personnel and school officials deemed appropriate by the Commissioner. One copy of the Individual Student Report should be given to the parent or guardian.

Timeline for Release of Results

April/May	— Results returned to schools and districts in the form of Rosters and Individual Student Reports.
June	— Analysis and aggregation of data by school and by district.
	— Release of your analysis to public and press (optional).
July	— Commissioner reports to the State Board and public the percent of students above the standard for all districts.
September	— Summary reports for class, building, and district returned for interpretation.
	— Special reports distributed to districts.
Sept./Nov.	— Interpretation period for summary reports.
November	— Review and approval of summary reports by County Superintendent's Office.
	— Commissioner presents state report to State Board of Education.
Nov./Dec.	— Public release of summary reports and interpretation data.

Suggested Methods for Release of Results

(1) News Release — Many times it is much more effective to initiate activities with the press than to respond to their requests. Information should be clear, concise, and easy to understand. Summarize results of analyses.

(2) Newsletter — Report to parents and other citizens with copies to the press. This format permits inclusion of charts and tables. Remember to keep the charts simple.

(3) School Board Report — Forward copies to the press following presentation at the Board of Education meeting, or have a summarizing fact sheet to distribute to the audience and press.

(4) News Conference — Probably effective only for large districts.

What the Press Wants to Know

(1) Did the percent of students meeting the statewide standard increase or decrease?

(2) Why?

(3) How do your results compare with _____?

(4) How do you feel about the results?

(5) What will you do now?

These will be the most commonly asked questions. For each question, you should have a relatively brief response, with back-up information. Let us examine each question in detail.

(1) Did the percent of students meeting the statewide standard increase or decrease?

If the percent increased considerably, the remaining questions will be much easier to answer. If it stayed the same or decreased, then a clear and concise answer should be prepared for Question #2.

(2) Why?

There are many variables which could influence the results. Analysis should be made prior to release of information. Regardless of the change in results from year to year, clear and concise statements should be made which list the variables that may have influenced the outcome. Above all, be frank and honest and explain things in simple terms.

(3) How do your results compare with_____?

Comparisons between districts are not appropriate, but they are made anyway. Suggest to the media that if they do compare your results with other districts that they select districts that are somewhat comparable (i.e., same District Factor Grouping, Community Type and student population). If you find it necessary to make comparisons, use the same criteria when selecting districts. The New Jersey State Department of Education urges that inappropriate comparisons be avoided.

(4) How do you feel about the results?

Be honest—are you pleased, disappointed, satisfied, encouraged, etc.?

(5) What will you do now?

Following analysis, develop a plan, regardless of the direction of the scores, even if only to continue your present programs. Have something ready.

When you meet the media be prepared. Avoid "off-the-cuff" comments; have prepared statements, facts, and statistics. Be sure to have analyzed the data beforehand. Above all, be honest and open in your discussions.

APPENDIX A

RATIONALE FOR EQUATING

In 1978, the first year of the Minimum Basic Skills Testing Program in its present form, the New Jersey State Board of Education resolved that the "cut-off" scores for the 1977-78 Minimum Basic Skills (MBS) Test would be set at 65 percent correct in Mathematics and 75 percent in Reading. These standards were recommended by the MBS Advisory Committee and were based upon the results of the Test Development Committee's use of the Nedelsky standard-setting procedure and the Technical Advisory Committee's analysis of the field test results.

The "cut-off" scores of 65 percent and 75 percent were not arbitrarily selected. The "cut-off" scores for a particular test take into consideration both the content of the test and the difficulty of the items on that test. These scores represent a level of achievement on the 1977-78 MBS Test that signifies that a particular student is minimally proficient in Mathematics and Reading.

The MBS Tests developed and administered in each year after 1977-78 contain all new items. However, the specifications (or objectives) upon which those new items are based remain unchanged from 1977-78.

A crucial aspect of the MBS Testing Program concerns the establishment of "cut-off" scores that are appropriate, taking into consideration the content and difficulty of the particular test items. More importantly, the definition of a "minimally proficient" achievement level must remain the same. We must set a "cut-off" score on each year's test so that the score's associated level of achievement is identical to the level of achievement associated with a score of 65 percent or 75 percent of the 1977-78 Minimum Basic Skills Mathematics and Reading tests, respectively. In other words, regardless of whether a student takes the 1977-78 MBS Test or the MBS Test developed in any successive year, the level of achievement that he/she must exhibit to demonstrate minimum proficiency must be identical.

In 1978-79, the second year of the present MBS Testing Program, a procedure was adopted for maintaining identical standards of proficiency from year to year. This procedure, called equating, was also applied to the current MBS Test and will be applied to the new test developed in every succeeding year. Therefore, the rationale for adoption of the procedure in 1978-79 will be explained here in some detail.

There were two alternatives for setting the 1978-79 "cut-off" score. The first, and most obvious, was to keep the same "cut-off" scores as the previous year. On the surface, this appears to be a logical and equitable approach. Unfortunately, this alternative is neither logical nor equitable.

Recall that 65 percent and 75 percent correct on the 1977-78 test represented a certain level of achievement on that particular test. Also recall that the 1978-79 test had

completely different items (although it measured the same objectives). The item writers were instructed to write new items that were equal in difficulty to their counterparts on the 1977-78 MBS Test. However, it is virtually impossible to construct two tests that are exactly of the same difficulty. Thus, each 1978-79 test item might be either slightly easier or harder than its 1977-78 counterpart.

Suppose that the 1978-79 test was easier than the 1977-78 test. If that were the case, a student should have been required to answer more items correctly to attain the same level of achievement as indicated by a 65 percent or 75 percent on the 1977-78 MBS Test. Conversely, if the new test was harder than the 1977-78 test, a student should have been required to answer fewer items correctly to attain the same level of achievement as 65 percent or 75 percent correct the previous year.

What would happen if we had kept the 65 percent and 75 percent standards regardless of test difficulty?

(1) If the new test was harder, then students with higher level of achievement would have been identified as requiring remediation. That is, there would have been students who, if they had taken the first year's test, would have met the minimum requirement; however, they would not have met the standard if they took the 1978-79 test instead.

(2) If the new test was easier, then students with a lower level of achievement would have been identified as not requiring remediation. That is, there would have been students who, if they had taken the first year's test, would not have met the minimum standard; however, they would have met the standard if they took the 1978-79 test.

(3) If the new test was identical in difficulty to the old test, then keeping the standard intact would have been entirely appropriate.

In summary, because the new test was not of the same difficulty as the old test, keeping the "cut-off" scores at 65 percent and 75 percent would identify a level of achievement as the minimum standard that was different from the previous year's.

The second alternative for determining the "cut-off" scores, outlined below, is more logical, more technically sound, and more equitable than the first alternative. To make the new "cut-off" scores equivalent to the last year's scores, we determined those scores on the new test which signified the same level of achievement as did 65 percent or 75 percent on the first year's test. Recall that the attainment of minimum competencies was not based simply on the figures 65 percent and 75 percent correct, but rather upon the level of achievement identified by answering those percents of the items correctly. The minimum standard is not a particular score (or percent correct) but, rather, a designated level of achievement that was demonstrated on the 1977-78 test by correctly answering 65 percent or 75 percent of the test items and which may be signified by a larger percent correct for an easier test or a smaller percent correct for a harder test.

To determine those scores on the 1978-79 test and the 1977-78 test which would signify the same level of achievement, statisticians analyzed the 1978-79 test data (including a 25-item selection from the previous year's test), and using appropriate techniques (see W. Angoff in R. L. Thorndike, Educational Measurement, 1971), equated the two sets of scores. Those scores that signified the same level of achievement on both tests would be identical. In other words, each possible score on the 1978-79 MBS Test was expressed in the units of the 1977-78 score scale.

It was strongly recommended by the members of the MBS Technical Advisory Committee and by the statisticians that the "cut-off" scores on the 1978-79 MBS Test be those scores that equate to (or signify the same achievement level as) 75 percent and 65 percent correct on the 1977-78 Reading and Mathematics tests, respectively.

To express this equating, a "score scale" was developed. This score scale ranges from 0-100; a 65 signifies the Mathematics standard and a 75 signifies the Reading standard. The score scale values are numbers, not percent correct scores or percentiles. They are based on the 1977-78 MBS Test. Thus, a student correctly answering 65 percent of the 1977-78 Mathematics items would have a score of 65. However, suppose, for example, that a student correctly answered 68 percent of the 1978-79 MBS questions correctly. Further, suppose that by the equating procedure it was determined that the level of achievement expressed by a raw score of 68 percent correct on the 1978-79 MBS Test was identical to the level of achievement expressed by a score of 66 percent correct on the 1977-78 MBS Test. Then, the student's 1978-79 scale score would be 66. That student has the same level of achievement as a student answering 66 percent of the 1977-78 test.

By using this score scale, which is known as the MBS Score Scale, we will always have scores of 65 and 75 corresponding to the minimum standard and the results from one year to the next will be directly comparable. It must be remembered that a student who receives a score of 65 may have to answer a greater or fewer number of items correctly based on the relative difficulty of the test compared to the difficulty of the 1977-78 MBS Test. However, the level of achievement signified by a score of 65 will always be the same.

This procedure is necessary for the Minimum Basic Skills Testing Program. A number of deleterious consequences would arise without the use of equated scores. First, erroneous comparisons would be made if the tests were not of exactly the same difficulty. Second, and more crucial, solely as a result of changes in the test itself and not because of any change in the students' achievement levels, remediation requirements might be imposed on students who in other years would have met or exceeded the minimum standard. Third, there would exist a "floating" standard, rather than the uniform standard prescribed.

In closing, it is important to repeat that the MBS Tests are used to determine level of achievement, and this level of achievement must be consistent from year to year. An MBS Score of 75 on this year's Reading test represents the same level of achievement as 75 percent correct on the 1977-78 MBS Test. An MBS Score of 65 on this year's Mathematics test represents the same level of achievement as 65 percent correct on the 1977-78 MBS Test.

APPENDIX B

NEW JERSEY ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

TITLE 6

EDUCATION

SUBTITLE G. RESEARCH, PLANNING AND EVALUATION
CHAPTER 39. EVALUATION
SUBCHAPTER 1. STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT
AUTHORITY: N.J.S.A. 18A:4-15, 18A:4-24, 18A:7A-1 et seq.

6:39-1.1 Authority of the commissioner

(a) The Commissioner of Education, with the approval of the State Board of Education, shall conduct an assessment of pupil achievement in the public school system of the State and of any grades therein by such means, tests and examinations as to him/her seem proper, and he/she shall report to the State Board the results of such inquiries and such other information with regard thereto as the State Board may require or as he/she shall deem proper.

(b) All such means, tests, if determined to be appropriate by the commissioner, and examinations to be administered pursuant to this rule shall be conducted by and in all operating school districts in New Jersey.

(c) Said school districts shall conduct such means, tests and examinations in the manner and at the times prescribed by the commissioner.

6:39-1.2 Minimum levels of pupil proficiency

(a) The State Board of Education, after consultation with the commissioner shall establish uniform statewide minimum levels of pupil proficiency in basic communication and computational skills on the statewide assessment instruments pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-6.

(b) In the event that certain grades are not administered the statewide assessment instruments, the Department of Education shall establish, for those grades, equivalent standards of pupil proficiency on tests which measure performance in basic communication and computational skills and meet State criteria.

(c) All pupils performing below the established minimum levels of pupil proficiency in basic communication and computational skills, as determined under N.J.A.C. 6:39-1.2 (a) and (b), shall be provided appropriate instructional services according to the district's basic skills improvement plan, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-6.

1. A local board may apply to the commissioner for a waiver of this requirement which may be granted if the program of needs assessment conducted pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6:8-3.4 (a) clearly demonstrates such enrollment is unnecessary or enrollment of a pupil above minimum levels of pupil proficiency is necessary.

6:39-1.3 Dissemination of information

(a) Notwithstanding N.J.A.C. 6:3-2.1 et seq., individual pupil data shall be released to, and only to, a pupil, his/her parent or legal guardian, and school personnel and school officials deemed appropriate by the commissioner.

(b) The State Department of Education shall produce and distribute to chief school administrators as uninterpreted reports: minimum standards reports; objective-referenced summary reports for the class(es), school(s), district, and county.

(c) The State Department of Education shall provide an interpreted State report to the State Board and the Commissioner of Education.

(d) Each of these reports shall consist of completed report forms and interpretive aids prescribed and approved by the commissioner.

(e) Objective-referenced summary reports shall be distributed to chief school administrators, as indicated in (b), (c), and (d) of this section, in such a manner as to provide a 60-day period from receipt of all reports for analysis of data and for the development of additional essential interpretive material by the chief school administrator pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6:39-1.4. During this period such material shall not be available for public distribution.

(f) Upon completion of the analysis, as indicated in subsection (e), but in no case later than the 60-day interpretation period established by the commissioner, all schools and districts shall submit a copy of their objective-referenced summary reports to the county superintendent, who shall verify that the reports are consistent with the interpretation guidelines previously approved by the commissioner. Upon notification of approval by the county superintendent, and upon approval by the local board of education, but in no case later than 30 days following the notification of approval by the county superintendent, objective-referenced summary reports for class(es), school(s) and district shall be made available to the public.

(g) Individual pupil reports shall be returned to districts in duplicate for all pupils tested. One copy of the report shall be maintained with the pupil's permanent records, and one copy shall be made available to the pupil, his/her parent or legal guardian in a timely fashion.

(h) Minimum standards reports shall be distributed to chief school administrators as indicated in subsection (b) of this section in such a manner as to provide a 30-day interpretation period prior to reporting to the local board of education and the public.

Following this 30-day period, the commissioner shall make available to the public minimum standards reports on each district which shall list the number of pupils tested and percent of pupils at or above the established minimum levels of pupil proficiency, by grade and by test.

(i) At the time the commissioner makes available to the public the information stated in (h), all districts shall make available to the public the number of pupils tested and the percent of pupils at or above the established minimum levels of pupil proficiency for each school and the district, by grade and by test.

(j) The commissioner may make exceptions to the above regulations, such as those required by the minimum standards provisions of the Public School Education Act of 1975 (N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-1 et seq.) as well as special reports requested by local school districts.

6:39-1.4 Interpretation of data

(a) Local chief school administrators and county superintendents of schools shall interpret the results of all data within 60 days of receipt of all objective-referenced summary reports.

(b) Local school district interpretation shall involve the chief school administrator in the interpretation of the district reports; the school principal in the interpretation of the school reports; and the teachers in the interpretation of the class reports.

(c) The State Department of Education will provide technical assistance in the development of essential interpretive material by local districts.

(d) The State Department of Education may provide interpretations for local, county and State use.

6:39-1.5 Exclusion of pupils

(a) Any pupil who has been classified as handicapped pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:46-1 et seq. shall participate in the testing program unless specific exemption from participating in this program is provided within that pupil's Individualized Education Program (N.J.A.C. 6:28-1.8 et seq.).

(b) Pupils who have been identified as limited English-speaking ability, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6:31-1.1 et seq., shall not be required, but may be permitted, to participate in the testing program. Such pupils shall be identified in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6:31-1.9. Upon the development of native language tests, such pupils shall be required to participate in the testing program.